



Angling

TO THE

ARCTIC



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6182

POLARPAM

**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
GUIDE TO SPORT FISHING
1965**

CANADA

1965 NORTHWEST TERRITORIES GUIDE TO SPORT FISHING CANADA

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ARCTIC TO THE Angling

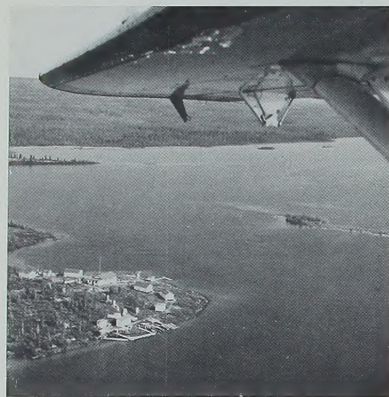



CUSTOMS and ENTRY

No passport is required for entry into Canada by British subjects or by U.S. citizens; however, identifying documents should be carried. There are no special entry regulations which apply to the Northwest Territories. Visitors who plan wilderness fishing trips by boat or private plane should leave an itinerary with the nearest R.C.M.P.

Visitors from other countries can bring clothing, personal effects, fishing equipment, boats, motors, cameras (with up to six rolls of film and 12 flash bulbs per person) etc., but must declare major items at the Canadian border. Up to 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, two pounds of tobacco and 40 ounces of alcohol per person may be brought in duty free.

Goods for consumption (food, gasoline, oil, etc.) are dutiable—but reasonable quantities for the tourist's use are granted free entry: for example, two days' food per person, and gas for 300 miles motoring.



First aerial glimpse of the anglers' paradise on Great Slave Lake

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. A package of information for anglers is available from the: Northwest Territories Tourist Office, Centennial Towers, Ottawa 4, Canada

This package includes an accommodation guide giving details of each hotel, motel and outfitting camp; a general tourist pamphlet "Travel North"; and other pamphlets and bulletins on maps and customs regulations.

2. The first movie depicting angling in the Territories, "Pay-dirt Angling", was completed in 1961. Prints of this film are available from a number of libraries in Canada and the United States. Please write to the Northwest Territories Tourist Office for a list of sources.

3. Fisheries in the Northwest Territories are administered by the Federal Department of Fisheries. For further information or interpretation of regulations, contact the nearest Fishery Officer or write to:

Area Director of Fisheries,
165 Garry St., Winnipeg, Man.

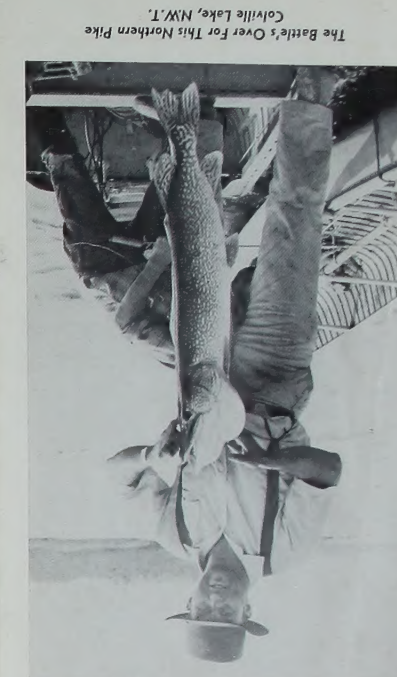
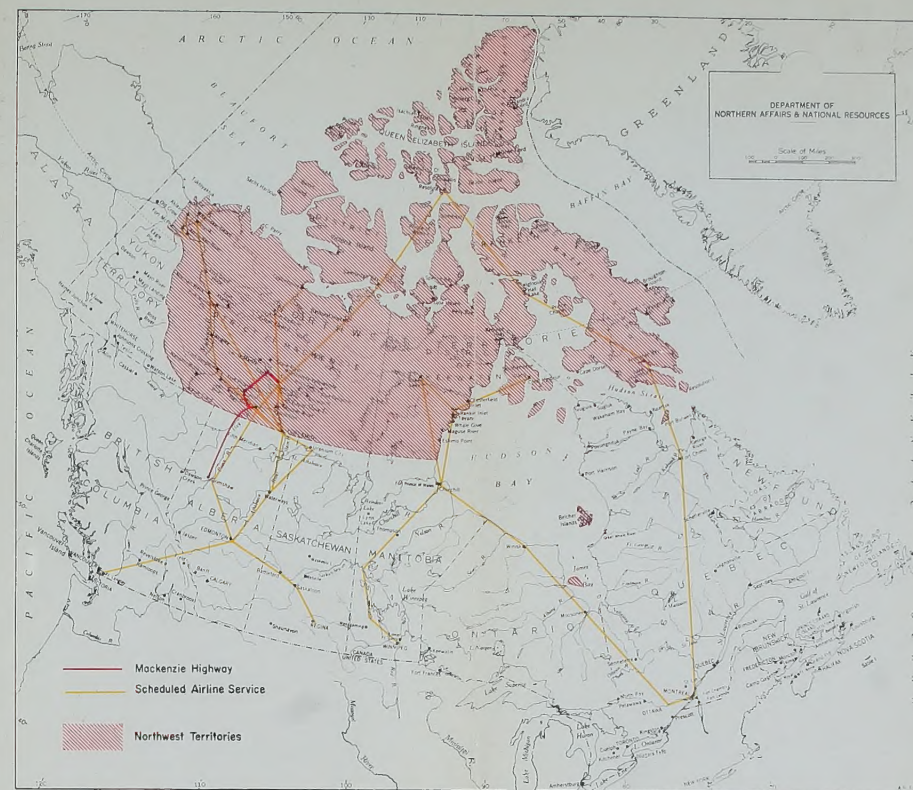
4. Anglers planning a motor trip to the Great Slave Lake area should request a copy of "The Mackenzie Highway to Canada's Northwest Territories" (available from the Northwest Territories Tourist Office) and may also wish to obtain detailed local information from the Boards of Trade at Yellowknife and Hay River, N.W.T. 5. Anglers who are planning to use the services of an outfitter will find that the camp operator is the best source of local information on seasons, angling conditions and equipment.

PLEASE

The bag limits are intended as a maximum. Within these limits, please keep only the fish that can be used at camp, or that you intend to take home with you.

Release other fish with care. Remove hooks carefully with as little damage as possible, and always handle the fish with rubber gloves or with wet hands.

Fish grow very slowly in the cold northern waters. Needless waste only reduces the available fish population. As the number of anglers increases, waste could contribute to a decline of sport fishing. Help us maintain the Territories' reputation for fabulous fishing.



The Battle's Over For This Northern Pike
Colville Lake, N.W.T.

0 1620 0338 8590
University of Alberta Library

Come on and Fish

"Down North"

- Angling in uncrowded waters, many never before fished by sportsmen.
- The "fightingest" fish of the species caught near the surface of the cold waters, even in mid-summer.
- The adventure of travel in a new and different area, and angling for different species of fish.
- The opportunity to try for world record fish.



Prize Lake Trout—Great Bear Lake



The Far Northern Angler's Magic Carpet
—The Bush Plane

LAST OF THE LAST FRONTIERS

Where would you go if you were offered an expense free fishing trip anywhere in Canada?

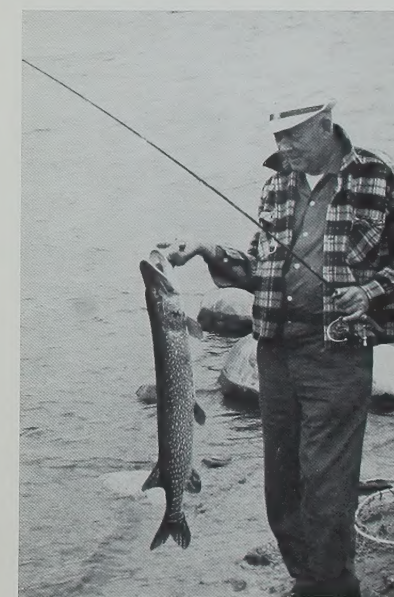
Mr. K. E. Derby of Milwaukee had the chance. He selected the Northwest Territories. What better recommendation can be offered? Where does an angler have a better chance of breaking the world record for lake trout, Arctic grayling or that exotic northerner, the Arctic char?

Despite the limited amount of angling, the world record for Arctic char has been broken several times in the last two years. A new world record for Arctic grayling has been established. A 62-pound lake trout came close to breaking the world record, and each year lake trout from the N.W.T. are at or near the top of their class.

As North America's fishing frontiers have been pushed northward, each area has been described in turn as the "last frontier". Canada's Northwest Territories, stretching some 1600 miles from the northern boundaries of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba to within 500 miles of the North Pole, is positively the last of the last northern fishing frontiers.

In the 1,300,000 square miles of the Northwest Territories there are untold thousands of lakes, connected to each other and to the sea by a web of small streams and great rivers. The waters range in size from rivulets to the mighty miles-wide Mackenzie, and from barrenland pothole lakes to the 10,000 square mile areas of Great Bear and Great Slave. Many of these water areas have never been fished by sportsmen. Some have been visited occasionally by bush pilots, survey crews or military parties. A few of the more accessible lakes have been fished consistently during recent years.

The main species fished to date have been lake trout, Arctic grayling and Arctic char. Northern pike and pickerel (yellow pike-perch or walleye) have received less attention but are common in many lakes of the more accessible parts of the Territories. Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake have developed as the main centres of Lake trout fishing, while the Tree River on the Arctic coast has produced the record-breaking Arctic char. There has been little angling for a relatively unknown fish—the Inconnu.



Admiring a tough fighter—the Northern Pike
of Great Slave Lake

ARRANGING A TRIP

One relatively small corner of the Northwest Territories is accessible by road. The Mackenzie Highway System, leading north from Grimshaw, Alberta (320 road-miles northwest of Edmonton) serves communities in the Great Slave Lake area, including Hay River and Yellowknife. There is some good fishing for motorists who bring their own boat or who are prepared to rent a boat in one of the communities. However, the best fishing locations are generally some distance from the settlements and some are accessible only by charter plane service.

A major portion of the Northwest Territories is served by scheduled airlines, operating out of Edmonton, Alberta; Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Montreal, Quebec. Connections with these carriers can be made through any of the transcontinental or transoceanic airlines.

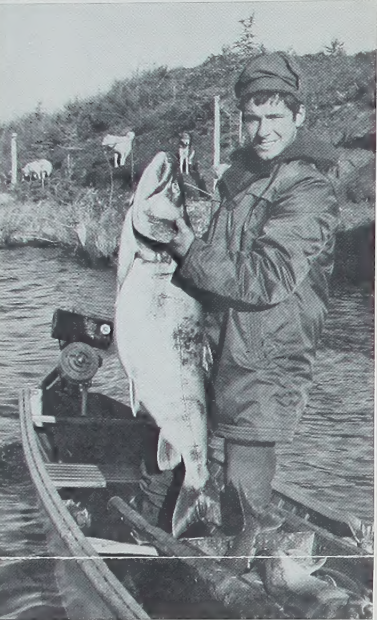
Anyone interested should first write to the Northwest Territories Tourist Office for general information. This information package will include an outline of the location, services and attractions offered by each outfitter. Anglers can then select and contact one or more of the outfitters, a travel agent or airline.



Produced by:
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TOURIST OFFICE
Centennial Towers
Ottawa, Canada

FISH SPECIES

The following brief outline on each of the major sporting species is based on available information. No attempt has been made to include information on several species including perch, Dolly Varden and brook trout, which are found in limited quantities or in limited areas of the Northwest Territories.



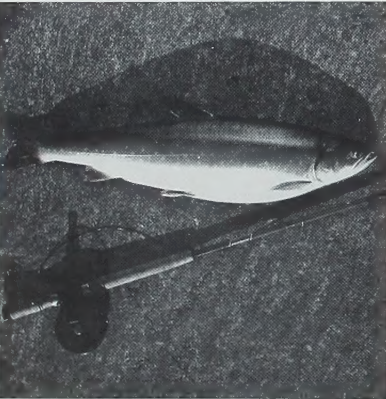
A "lunker" Lake Trout—Colville Lake—N.W.T.

LAKE TROUT (Salvelinus namaycush)

The surface-fighting "lakers" of the Territories are similar, by scientific definition, to the lake trout of southern Canada. But that is where the similarity ends. Their behaviour on the end of a line must be experienced to be believed. Veteran anglers compare their behaviour and fighting qualities with that of brook trout. This applies particularly to lake trout in the 10-pound and under class. They tend to fight on or near the surface, alternately diving and breaking water in an effort to throw the lure. The larger lakers are more inclined to run for deep water when hooked and "bulldog" in the depths. The lake trout is the most widely distributed game fish in the Territories and is found throughout the Mackenzie, Coppermine, Back and Thelon drainage systems. The main angling waters to date have been Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes, each more than 10,000 square miles in area. The largest known trout caught to date was a 62-pound four ounce lunker hooked in Great Bear Lake during 1963, and lake trout in the 30 and 40-pound class are common. There is an excellent possibility that lake trout capable of breaking the world record await anglers in several lakes in the Territories. In most northern waters the lake trout can be caught near the surface throughout the summer because the water does not warm up enough to force the fish into the depths. A spinning or casting reel with six to eight-pound test line is ideal all-round sporting gear. It is wise also to take trolling gear along for a change of pace or for fishing the depths in areas where warmer water from rivers may force the lake trout down. For the ultimate in sport, lake trout can sometimes be taken with flyrod using wet flies.

ARCTIC CHAR (Salvelinus alpinus)

This spectacular fighting fish of the far north is one of the least known and least fished game species in North America. It is a member of the salmon, trout and char family of fishes. It is considered to be a close cousin of several members of the family including the Atlantic salmon and red trout, drawing from each some of its finest sporting and eating qualities. Although few anglers have even heard of Arctic char, it has won acclaim as a northern delicacy at the tables of gourmets throughout the continent. Char are found in the green waters of the Arctic, from the rugged coasts of Baffin Island on the east to within 100 miles of the Mackenzie River on the west. There are two broad categories, the land-locked or freshwater, and the sea-run. Even within these categories there appears to be an appreciable variation in appearance and behaviour between fish in various geographic locations. In general, the char is very streamlined in shape and has been described as a "silvery torpedo". Its back is actually dark green in colour, shading to silvery sides and belly with pinkish spots on the sides. At spawning time the males develop a protruding and hooked lower jaw and the belly and sides may turn a vivid orange-red. The Coppermine-Cambridge Bay area in the Western Arctic is the current 'hot spot' for Arctic char. Hundreds of anglers have fished this area in the past two years in search of world record fish. The largest caught to date in the Tree River weighed 27 pounds and still ranks No. 1 in the char records. While char of 15 pounds are reported to be common in some rivers, they usually average five to seven pounds. They can be taken with wet flies but gold, silver, or reddish-coloured lures are more commonly used. Six to eight-pound test line on a spinning reel will ensure the angler a maximum of thrills.



An Arctic Char.

The char is not a spectacular jumper like the Atlantic salmon, but will frequently take off 100 yards or more of line in one powerful drive and then jump or thrash on the surface in an effort to shake the lure. Sometimes they can be brought in towards the shore apparently tired and docile after the first run, but as they approach the shore they may suddenly turn and drive out to sea again for a repeat performance. It is on this type of action that the char has won its reputation as a rod and line breaker.

ARCTIC GRAYLING (Thymallus arcticus)

This spectacular northern acrobat has been described as the "flower of fishes" and it is unquestionably one of the world's most beautiful freshwater fish. It also provides some of the finest thrills the north can offer to a fly-fisherman, and one of the fish world's most delicately flavoured dishes for the epicure. It is generally dark blue on the back and purple grey on the sides. Its outstanding characteristic is the large sail-like, highly-coloured dorsal fin: blackish grey with a bright red band on the upper edge and a scattering of blue and violet spots. This is a true northern fish found only in water systems draining into the Arctic Ocean. It is particularly common in the Mackenzie, Coppermine, Anderson, Thelon and Back drainages. During the summer months grayling are found mainly in cold swiftly-flowing rivers, but they are also commonly found in bays of some of the larger lakes such as Great Bear. They average between one and two pounds but the world record Arctic grayling caught in the Great Slave Lake area weighed in at an even five pounds. Grayling are generally fairly easy to catch. They will take wet or dry flies readily and some types of small metal lures. However, they are sometimes temperamental and they then require utmost skill on the part of the angler. They put on a relatively short-lived but spectacular display when hooked, usually clearing the water in two or three good jumps. Recommended flies include the Par Bell, Black Gnat, Silver Doctor, Gray and Brown Hackles, and Light and Dark Cahills on a number 10 or 12 hook. When the fish are feeding on larvae, nymphs are particularly effective.



Arctic Grayling—A real scrapper—Snowdrift, N.W.T.

NORTHERN PIKE (Esox lusius)

The angling interest in big "northern" which has been generated in the Precambrian lakes of the provinces and the northern states has yet to catch on in the Territories. The abundance and fighting qualities of the lake trout have tended to overshadow the pike. However, there are plenty of targets for the avowed pike fishermen, particularly in the Great Slave Lake area, and to varying degrees throughout the drainage systems of the Mackenzie and Anderson Rivers. The pike generally run between five and fifteen pounds but numerous fish in the 30-40 pound class have been reported.

PICKEREL (Stizostedion vitreum vitreum)

The previous comments about overshadowing of the Northern pike apply equally to the pickerel (dore, walleye or yellow pike-perch). Pickerel have been fished mainly by resident anglers. They are common in many of the smaller lakes around Great Slave, particularly in the Hay River and Yellowknife areas. They are found to a lesser extent in lakes farther north, including Great Bear. They do not generally run to more than 10 pounds.

INCONNU (Stenodus leueichtnys)

The coney or sheefish might only have merited mention along with the Dolly Varden trout and brook trout, but it is known to exist in areas which are accessible to anglers and it presents a challenge to the sport fisherman who is looking for something different. The inconnu was appropriately named the "unknown" by Alexander Mackenzie's French-Canadian voyageurs, and it is still largely an unknown fish as far as angling is concerned. Numerous coney are caught in the Hay River in May or early June after break-up. They are also common in the Big Buffalo, Talston and Anderson Rivers. They are a member of the whitefish family and with their dark back, silvery sides and large scales, somewhat resemble a large herring. The inconnu average eight to twenty pounds but specimens weighing over 70 pounds have been reported by commercial fishermen. They are usually taken on spoons or spinning lures. There are conflicting reports on their eating and sporting qualities. During the next few years the controversy will be either fanned or settled as more sport fishermen tangle with this unknown of the north.

LICENCES and REGULATIONS

The fisheries resources of the Northwest Territories are administered by the Federal Department of Fisheries. The Department has endeavoured to simplify the angling regulations as much as possible for the benefit of sport fishermen, while ensuring that the fisheries will not be over-harvested. Please note that the following is a simplified summary and not an official listing of regulations:

- Licences:** Resident..... \$1.00
Non-resident..... \$2.00
An angling licence permits the holder to fish by means of hook and line from April 1 to the following March 31. Licences may be purchased from Fisheries officers in Hay River and Yellowknife; from R.C.M.P. detachments in most settlements, or through many of the outfitters.
- Open Season:** No closed dates for any species.
- Catch Limits:** Trout and grayling—not more than 10 per day, of which not more than 5 shall be trout. No possession limit.
Arctic char—not more than 5 per day, and a possession limit of 10.
Tree River, not more than 2 per fishing trip. Any Arctic char not taken away shall be given to the Eskimos. Pickerel (yellow pike-perch, dore, wall-eyed pike) not more than 10 per day. No possession limit. Northern pike—no catch or possession limits. Other species—no catch or possession limits.
- Types of Bait:** No one shall use any bait or line capable of giving off light by either natural or artificial means.
- Guides:** Guides are not compulsory but it is advisable to hire a competent guide when fishing in unfamiliar waters.
- Live Bait:** Introduction of non-indigenous fish into the Territories is prohibited except by authority of the Minister of Fisheries.

CLOTHING and EQUIPMENT

The type of clothing required depends to some extent on the location in the Territories. In the Great Slave Lake area during July and August the mean daily maximum temperature is 70 degrees and the mean daily minimum 50 degrees. Temperatures occasionally go up to 85 degrees and down at night to 35 degrees. A warm windbreaker is essential and a set of long underwear is recommended. Farther north and east the temperatures gradually decline until at Cambridge Bay and Frobisher Bay on the Arctic Islands the mean daily maximum temperature during July and August is about 55 degrees and the mean daily minimum is 40 degrees. The equivalent of late fall hunting clothes is recommended for these areas. Long sunny days (up to 24 hours) with very light rainfall are the general rule throughout the Territorial summer, but a light plastic raincoat or some type of waterproof clothing is recommended, particularly in the coastal areas. There are wonderful tales told of the insect menace in the north, and there is an element of truth in these tales. At the wrong place and the wrong time, mosquitoes and blackflies can be sufficiently numerous to drive men indoors. Much of the time anglers will find the insect problem no worse than in forest areas farther south; but take along a good supply of fly dope, heavy trousers and a head net as insurance. Suggestions regarding angling equipment are contained in the section describing individual species. Because of personal preferences, it is difficult to make more than general recommendations. Fly fishermen will find that Arctic grayling are their main target, although lake trout can be taken under the right conditions. Many anglers troll for lake trout, even in shallow water, and in some of the smaller lakes in the southern part of the Territories it appears that the water does warm up enough in summer to force the lake trout down. In these lakes, trolling gear is essential. Generally speaking, casting or spinning gear is satisfactory all-round equipment for the Territories and will take all species. Anglers should pack an extra rod and reel and a supply of their favourite lures. All standard supplies can be purchased at any of the towns or larger settlements, but some of the camps and best angling locations are quite remote from any source of repair or replacement. Other equipment and supplies should include sunglasses and skin lotion for protection during the long hours of sunlight, and cameras to record the catch of a lifetime.



A snug sport fishing camp—Great Slave Lake, N.W.T.

GUIDES and OUTFITTERS

A number of fully-modern, well-equipped sport fishing camps have been established in the Northwest Territories during the last three or four years. These camps have cabin or lodge accommodation. Some of the camps offer package tours. The cost per day ranges from \$50.00 to \$75.00 per person for all services: guides, boats, motors and fuel, meals, accommodation and other incidentals. Other camps offer less expensive rates for the angler who cannot afford a complete service package. Anglers can successfully fish some of the smaller lakes and rivers, particularly those adjacent to the Mackenzie Highway System, on their own. But for reasons of safety and success, visiting anglers should hire the services of a guide or outfitter. Following are the names and addresses of all outfitters listed with the Northwest Territories Tourist Office as of May 1, 1965. More complete information on each outfitter is contained in the accommodation guide (see "For Further Information").

Western Arctic

Arctic Islands Lodge,
Fred Ross, Prop.,
Cambridge Bay, N.W.T. or
10336 Villa Ave.,
Edmonton, Alta.

Mission Lodge,
Our Lady of the Snows Mission,
Colville Lake, N.W.T.

Plummer's Tree River Camp,
Great Bear Lake Lodge,
Warren C. Plummer, Prop.,
c/o Airport Hotel,
Winnipeg, Man.

Great Bear Lake

Arctic Circle Lodge,
Box 3461,
St. Paul, Minnesota.

Cameron Bay Lodge,
P.O. Box 2647,
Parker, Arizona.

Great Bear Lake Lodge Ltd.,
Warren Plummer, Prop.,
c/o Airport Hotel,
Winnipeg, Man.

Great Bear Lodge,
205 Strand Bldg.
Sioux Falls, South Dakota, U.S.A.

Great Slave Lake Area

Campbell Lake Tent Lodge,
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Frontier Fishing Lodge,
2nd floor, 10006—107th St.
Edmonton, Alta.

Great Slave Lake Lodge Ltd.,
c/o Airport Hotel,
Winnipeg, Man.

Prelude Lodge,
Box 423,
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Snowdrift Fishing Lodge,
Kermit Goar, Prop.,
607 Second Ave. West,
Williston, North Dakota

Trophy Lodge,
c/o D. W. Finlayson,
P.O. Box 670,
Yellowknife, N.W.T., Canada.

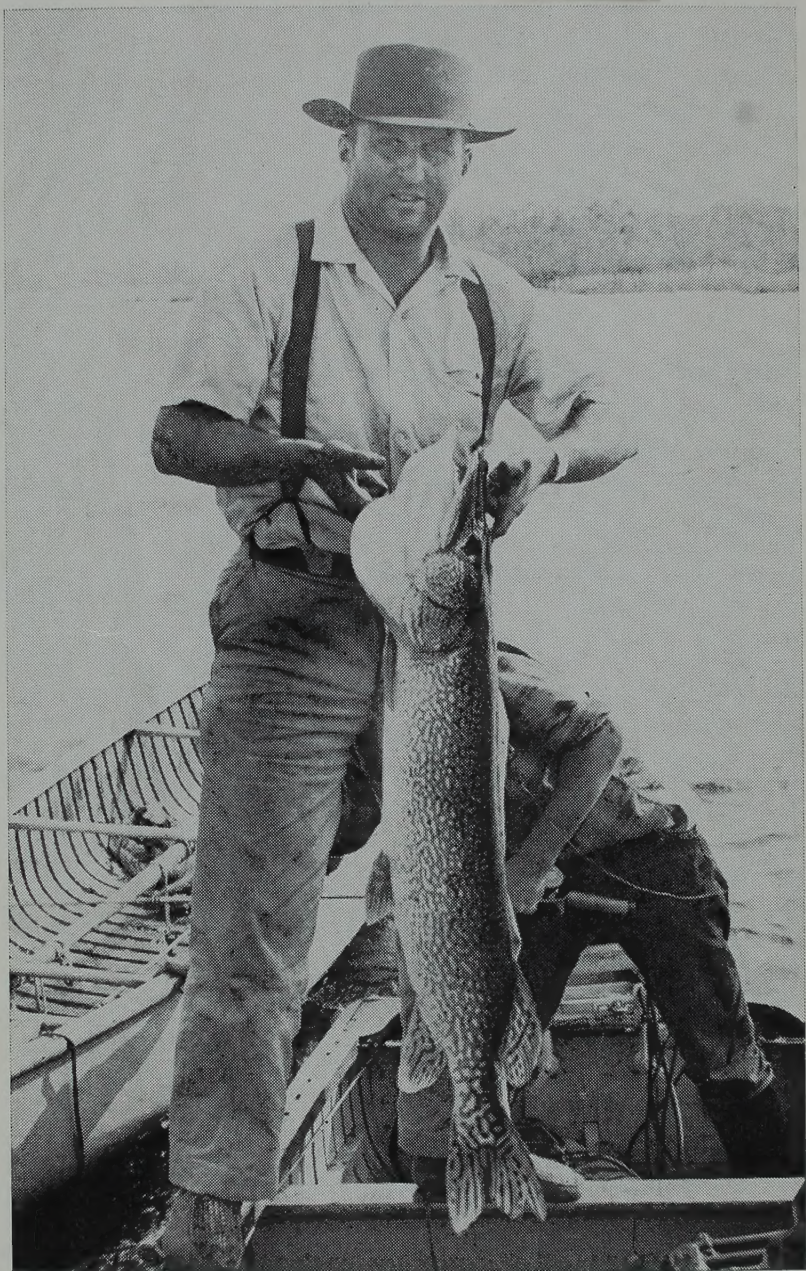
Fort Smith Area

Burnt Lake Cabins,
P.O. Box 192,
Fort Smith, N.W.T.

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*The Battle's Over For This Northern Pike
Colville Lake, N.W.T.*